

## On Shakespeare's *Sonnets* (Continued)\*

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Commenting on Sonnet 61, J. D. Wilson observes that 'most critics have missed the humble irony of the whole, the accusations implied in the octet, and the passionate outburst of the sestet,'<sup>(13)</sup> and '61 is, like 43, a night-piece, but as unhappy as 43 is happy.'<sup>(14)</sup> As for the interpretation of Sonnet 61, he is right in that very subtle, but clear, ironical reproach may be communicated, esp. in the lines, 'Mine own true love that doth my rest defeat, /To play the watchman ever for thy sake,' and in a rather self-mocking tone of the couplet 'For thee watch I, whilst thou dost wake elsewhere,/ From me far off, with others all too near.' Our rather dull fancy could make out of it a short story that the Friend was far away, playing some amorous adventure, while the poet was guarding him without sleep rather foolishly. The main theme may be the poet's sleeplessness for the sake of his love to the Friend, in which the thought of the Friend makes him see his image during the whole night, but another newly emerging subject of his jealousy, not of 'thy jealousy', is appealing to the reader more acutely; psychologically considering, the behaviour 'into my deeds to pry,/To find out shames of idle hours in me', which the poet insists belongs to the Friend, is not his but the poet's own and the pronouns in those lines should be changed into the reverse relation and the reader may implicitly understand those lines as meaning 'to pry into thy deeds and find shames of idle hours in thee.' Furthermore the word 'watchman' is deliberately and artfully used in order to convey the author's mixed feeling of longing and jealousy.

However as for the interpretation of Sonnet 43, I do not agree to Wilson's point that it is 'happy'.<sup>(14)</sup> For, if we might be sure of his view, how could we understand the second and third quatrains ?

Then thou whose shadows doth make bright,  
How would thy shadow's form, form happy show,  
To the clear day with thy much clearer light,  
When to unseeing eyes thy shade shines so !  
How would (I say) mine eyes be blessed made,  
By looking on thee in the living day,  
When in dead night the fair imperfect shade,  
Through heavy sleep on sightless eyes doth stay !

The purport is how much more he should like to see him in the daylight to enjoy his bright sight if he is always dreaming his bright dream all through the night

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with gladness; and as his wish is not rewarded, the poet here is not in the state of happiness but in the eager expectation for happiness, or in other words he is not whole-heartedly happy though he may be happy in dreams. Then the theme in this sonnet is a lover's longing for friendship with no taint of jealousy, though it is clear that they may be separated at present.

Though the jealousy presentation of Sonnet 61 might be a development theme from the longing wish of Sonnet 43, their tones are rather different and their sense-contents might be distinguished from each other: in Sonnet 43 the poet wishes for the realization of his dream positively and centrifugally, while in Sonnet 61 he is submerged in his own self-mocking state of self-effacement rather resignedly. Then it might be doubted from the current of their meanings that Sonnets 43 and 61 could make a pair of duplicate creations, though the pattern of imagination working might be parallel to that of the pairs examined: Sonnet 43 is a frank statement of the poet's true voice of feeling, while Sonnet 61 is conceitfully written in the artistic, fictional direction as is understood from the contrastive personifications of 'thy will' or 'thy spirit' or 'thy love' and 'my love'. Furthermore, it seems to me, some lapse of time can be perceived between Sonnet 43 and Sonnet 61 from their difference in tone. Consequently, admitting the structural relationship between them, we might conclude that Sonnets 43 and 61 might have been written on different occasions, not at the same time for the duplicate production.

Lastly we take up the case of the sonnets which should be cross-examined and crossly referred to each other when considering the pattern of working of imagination. A good example may be the quadruplet of Sonnets 49, 88, 89 and 90. When we have read Sonnet 88 and come to Sonnet 89, we might suspect that they could make a pair on account of the similarity of sense-content between them. For example, the line 'Upon thy side, against my self I'll fight' in Sonnet 88 is quite similar to the line 'For thee, against my self I'll vow debate' in Sonnet 89; the behaviour suggested by the line 'Speak of my lameness, and I straight will halt' is nothing but an example of 'The injuries that to my self I do'; and the sense meant is quite the same between the lines 'And (I'll) prove thee virtuous, though thou art forsworn' and 'Against thy reasons making no sense'. Furthermore, the juxtaposition of the three lines from each sonnet surprises us with the similarity of their sentiments and fictitiousnesses:

With mine own weakness being best acquainted,  
Upon thy part I can set down a story  
Of faults concealed, wherein I am attained: (Sonnet 88)  
Say that thou didst forsake me for some fault,  
And I will comment upon that offence,  
Speak of my lameness, and I straight will halt: (Sonnet 89)

The former is with the poet's intention to make a fiction out of his own faults because of his feeling of humility or self-degradation, while the latter is with his

artificial (or false) commentary on the fault imposed by the beloved with his feeling of self-effacement. Lastly speaking from the poet's psychological attitude, the antithesis of lightness in Sonnet 88 (e.g. 'Doing thee vantage, double-vantage me') to seriousness in Sonnet 89 (e.g. 'As I'll my self disgrace, knowing thy will') might correspond to the pattern of imagination working in the pairs already examined. The development of the usage of the word 'acquaintance' in Sonnet 89 from the verb 'acquainted' in Sonnet 88 might be supposed to correspond to the development of the theme. And the thematical development can be seen from the poet's willing wrong-bearing in Sonnet 88 to the Friend's deification (e.g. 'I (too much profane)') in Sonnet 89. From the point of style, the expression 'Be absent from thy walks and in my tongue,/Thy sweet beloved name no more shall dwell' is more formal and consciously constructed than the immediate and direct saying 'Such is my love, to thee I so belong,/That for thy right, my self will bear all wrong.' Of course, the construction 'Lest ...should' is consciously of the literary expression. Stylistic elaboration and conceitful expression (e.g. 'acquaintance strangle') is characteristic of Sonnet 89 while sincere and direct expression of the poet's true voice of feeling is the attribute of Sonnet 88.

But J. D. Wilson, introducing C. K. Pooler's view that Sonnet 88 is 'Perhaps a continuation of 49',<sup>(15)</sup> says that he is right, and his suggestion induces me to suspect that Sonnets 49 and 88 might make a pair. Then I follow Sonnet 49, not in the direction to the denial of Wilson's standpoint, but in the direction of the admittance of his view:

Against that time (if ever that time come)  
 When I shall see thee frown on my defects,  
 When as thy love hath cast his utmost sum,  
 Called to that audit by advised respects,  
 Against that time when thou shalt strangely pass,  
 And scarcely greet me with that sun thine eye,  
 When love converted from the thing it was  
 Shall reasons find of settled gravity;  
 Against that time do I ensconce me here  
 Within the knowledge of mine own desert,  
 And this my hand, against my self uprear,  
 To guard the lawful reasons on thy part,  
     To leave poor me, thou hast the strength of laws,  
     Since why to love, I can allege no cause.

In the octet in the sonnet the poet is expecting with sorrow the coming change of the Friend's love: that is, he is seeing in imagination the future 'when I shall see thee frown on my defects' or 'when thou shalt strangely pass,/And scarcely greet me with that sun thine eye'. And the lines concerned correspond to the first two lines

in Sonnet 88, 'When thou shalt be disposed to set me light,/And place my merit in the eye of scorn'. Viewed from the proportion attributed to that subject, Sonnet 49 puts emphasis rather upon the poet's solitariness and the Friend's indifference than the subject of his self-effacement in Sonnet 88, though he is clearly proposing that he should 'this my hand, against my self uprear,/To guard the lawful reasons on thy part,' the whole range of whose meaning the twelve lines in Sonnet 88 are describing in detail. In both sonnets the metaphorical setting is in the court of law and the poet's part is on the side of both the accused of his own fault (or merit) and the defender of the Friend's accusation. Both compared from the point of sense-content, Sonnet 49 is largely with the degrading favor from the Friend, while Sonnet 88 is mainly with the satisfied suffering on the part of the poet; in short, both sonnets share the same situation, with the emphatic point exchanged and in that sense they may make a pair, the poet's imagination working in the opposite directions, though the similarity in the point of the use of words is fairly thin. Stylistically speaking, Sonnet 49 is more formal and self-conscious and elaborate, as we can see, for example, in the neatness of the repetitive complex sentence-construction and in the careful finale of the couplet using the lawful setting, 'Since why to love, I can allege no cause.' Thus considered, the consciously-written Sonnet 49 and the considerably natural Sonnet 88 could make a pair, corresponding to the pattern of imagination working above-examined, though no doubt can be dismissed, it seems, of the certainty of the pair. Then we may have two possibilities: (1) that Sonnets 49 and 88 might make a pair or (2) that Sonnet 49 and 89 could make a pair. But the latter possibility we might not admit, because in Sonnet 89 there is no indication of futurity with the sense of anxiety or sadness and because, when compared, Sonnet 88, not Sonnet 49, is more approximate to Sonnet 89. So we had better conclude that Sonnets 49 and 88 can make a pair and Sonnet 89 might be a duplicate of Sonnet 90.

As for Sonnets 89 and 90, the only indication of their sequence is in the last line of the former and in the first line of the latter: having said, 'I must ne'er love him whom thou dost hate,' the poet goes on to appeal without lapse of time or hesitation, 'Then hate me when thou wilt, if ever, now.' And in Sonnet 90 a new current topic which can not be found in any sonnet concerned here, is introduced: 'Now while the world is bent my deeds to cross.' The main purport is that the poet wishes the Friend to leave him at the beginning of his woe: 'Give not a windy night a rainy morrow/To linger out a purposed overthrow.' While the other three sonnets presents the theme of humility as self-abnegation, Sonnet 90 is concerned with the moment of lost love and with the appeal for the instant separation of the Friend, which no other sonnet in question might seem to ask for in feeling. Thus considering, we may conclude that Sonnet 90 would be separate from them but for the relatedness of the initial casual sequence. But it may belong in the freer play of the poet's imagination, developing from the likely description of the desolate situation in Sonnet 89. And in that sense Sonnet 90

might be said to be more imaginary than Sonnet 89, which it is true is fictionally founded, but may be closer to the present situation in feeling. In the point of appealing intensity, on the contrary, Sonnet 90 is keener than Sonnet 89 but the contrastive relationship between the pairs is maintained and consequently Sonnets 89 and 90 might make a pair though the thematic and wording similarity between them is rather thin. (We might rather say urgent tone in Sonnet 90 could persuade us to assume so.)

Finally to conclude from the above examination as a whole. Even if we may abstain from the final judgement whether the pair be Sonnets 49 and 88 or Sonnets 88 and 89, we might say that the closeness in sense-content of the three could reveal the proximity of the times that they were written or the same time of their production and the urgency of the appeal in Sonnet 90 could reveal the fact that Sonnets 89 and 90 were written at the same time. Thus we may conclude these four sonnets can make a quadruplet rather than two pairs.

To sum up: from the analyses of several examples above-cited the duplicate pattern of writing may be said to lie in Shakespeare's *Sonnets* and in the pair of sonnets one is rather natural or informal in sense and style and the other formal or elaborate through the freer exercise of his imagination. Other examples belonging to the same pattern are the pairs of Sonnets 30-31 and Sonnets 59-106, both of which I am going to take up for analysis in the following chapter, and Sonnets 55-65, 63-64 and 100-101 etc.

## 2. Embodiment of the Imaginary Portrait of the Friend

### (1) References to the Past

Referring to the poet's activity in the apotheosis of his Friend, J. W. Lever admits the following assumption as the starting point :

It is better to take Shakespeare at his word and assume that he meant what he said; that he seriously intended the Friend's beauty, and his truth as well, to appear as 'the very archetypal pattern and substance' which the sonnets declared them to be.<sup>(16)</sup>

Based on such a fundamental assumption, our survey should go on to analyze in detail what he said and to inquire into the poet's poetic mind. First, to know the meaning of the Friend as an archetype of beauty, we had better examine the references to the past in relation to the Friend's beauty. To cite first Sonnet 53:

What is your substance, whereof are you made,  
That millions of strange shadows on you tend?  
Since every one, hath every one, one shade,  
And you but one, can every shadow lend:  
Describe Adonis and the counterfeit,  
Is poorly imitated after you,  
On Helen's cheek all art of beauty set,

And you in Grecian tires are painted new:  
 Speak of the spring, and foison of the year,  
 The one doth shadow of your beauty show,  
 The other as your bounty doth appear,  
 And you in every blessed shape we know.

In all external grace you have some part,  
 But you like none, none you for constant heart.

The poet asks the Friend's substance of him with admiration 'That millions of strange shadows on you tend,' and compares his beauty with several typical beauties, concluding that even Adonis, who is the handsomest youth in the world, and Helen, who is the most beautiful woman in history, are nothing but his shadows and adding that the seasons of spring and autumn could not surpass his beauty: that is to say, his Friend has every shade of beauty as the original property of beauty. But the sentence, 'In all *external* grace you have some part' (my own italics), can not be taken at its face-value, because the poet presents it as an ironical preface to the suggestion that 'internal' grace should accompany that 'external' beauty: 'But you like none, none you for constant heart.' Though the concluding implication and tone are not favourable, the description of his 'external' beauty is valid and effective. So we may say that his beauty is assumed to be an original archetype of beauty, after the example of which every beauty is imitated: that is, he is himself an Idea of beauty in the sense of Platonic philosophy. In that sense examined above, he may be considered, it seems to me, to be a type rather than an individual though the poet's admiration for him could not be effaced, suggesting that his individuality may be said to have an allegorical nuance.

Though the thematic emphasis is different, we may read Sonnet 106 in the same vein and spirit. The poet tries to examine the attributes of the beautiful persons in the chronicle of the ancient time:

Then in the blazon of sweet beauty's best,  
 Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,  
 I see their antique pen would have expressed,  
 Even such a beauty as you master now.  
 So all their praises are but prophecies  
 Of this our time, all you prefiguring,  
 And for they looked but with divining eyes,  
 They had not skill enough your worth to sing:

Then he discovers to his surprise that they are only the 'prefiguring' figures, expecting your coming with prophetic praises. In other words those ancient beauties could not surpass the Friend in the sense that the late comer be more excellent in quality. In this sonnet the direction of thinking is reverse to that of Sonnet 53 but the sense that he is the most beautiful Idea is still maintained: consequently, the 'archetype'

in the sense of historical beginning could not be supported, but it might be permissible that we might call him the prototype of beauty in the sense of the categorical origin. So in this sonnet also the poet advocates the nature of the Friend as the only example or Idea.

The same conclusion is implied in the couplet of Sonnet 59 :

O sure I am the wits of former days,

To subjects worse have given admiring praise.

The purport of the sonnet is that as there is 'nothing new under the sun' according to the old saying, the poet wishes that he could read the praises of the Friend's image in some olden book to know 'what the old world could say,/To this composed wonder of your frame.' So the above conclusion may be presented askance, not directly, because his expected presumption is naturally that 'revolution' is the same according to the old saying presented above and the praises in the 'antique' book can be applied to the Friend just in the same way. Then the poet could not but change the direction of the theme because he is always wishing to praise the Friend best of all; that is, he cannot help saying in a rather challenging way that the objects the old writers treated are worse than his object of beauty. He might conclude that not bad were their praises, but their objects did not deserve them properly. In his hidden tone and not-expressed feeling we may discern the same assumption of the beautiful type mentioned above.

The above examination has revealed that the poet's universal idealization of the Friend in a rather allegorical (or symbolical) and historical way, but on the contrary in the pair of Sonnets 30 and 31 he introduces him in a rather intimate and personal way :

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought,  
I summon up remembrance of things past,  
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,  
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste :  
Then can I drown an eye (unused to flow)  
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,  
And weep afresh love's since cancelled woe,  
And moan the expense of many a vanished sight.  
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone  
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er  
The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,  
Which I new pay as if not paid before.

But if the while I think on thee (dear friend)

All losses are restored, and sorrows end. (Sonnet 30)

Thy bosom is endeared with all hearts,  
Which I by lacking have supposed dead,

And there reigns love and all love's loving parts,  
And all those friends which I thought buried.  
How many a holy and obsequious tear  
Hath dear religious love stol'n from mine eye,  
As interest of the dead, which now appear,  
But things removed that hidden in thee lie.  
Thou art the grave where buried love doth live,  
Hung with the trophies of my lovers gone,  
Who all their parts of me to thee did give,  
That due of many, now is thine alone.

    Their images I loved, I view in thee,

    And thou (all they) hast all the all of me. (Sonnet 31)

As these sonnets make a pair in sense-content, we had better consider them in the same sequence for a better appreciation of the poet's feeling towards the beloved. From the viewpoint of the pair-construction, the main emphasis of the former sonnet is upon 'grievances foregone' and 'fore-bemoaned moan' and that of the latter upon the restored 'love and love's loving parts', though the main purport of both sonnets is that the living sight of the Friend makes the poet glad in reward for his sorrow at the past and dead friendship. The significance of Sonnet 31 in this context is that the poet expresses explicitly the reason why he loves his Friend: that is, because (1) the latter is incarnated as the symbol of all the former's dead 'hearts' and 'friends', to whom he often paid his devotional tribute of 'many a holy and obsequious tear' as in a religious ceremony, and (2) 'their images' are amassed in the unified image of the Friend. In other words, the Friend has become the cause of the poet's emotional endearment as 'the trophies of my lovers gone' and his image has become the object of the poet's longing for his memorial beauties as 'the grave where buried love doth live.' To sum up, the Friend here is loved as the origin of the universal emotional endearment or as the type of the general memorial beauty. While he is presented as an idealization of beauty with the rather objective attitude of mind in Sonnets 53, 59 and 109, in the pair of these sonnets he is defined as the embodiment of accumulated loving images with some emotional tinge. In both cases of them the poet is trying to define the Friend or the type of beauty from the opposed imaginative attitudes of objective reasoning and subjective emotion. We may add lastly that the Platonic idealization may tend to define the Friend as the un-individualized or un-characterized type of beauty, while the memorial endearment tends to present him as the synthetic figure not deriving from his proper existence, but rather from the poet's accumulated feeling of love and both features in co-operation are revealing rather the poet's egocentric tendency of feeling than the Friend's particular characterization. We might conclude that the poet's past experience both in deed and reading might have given birth to the Presence of an imaginary beloved, which might have been modelled



upon a real person in his personal history.

(2) The Poet's Apprehension about Future

As for the reference to the time of future, many of the *Sonnets* are filled with unbelief in or, rather, apprehension about future: the sense of Time in them is related to the notion of Time the killer (or Time who has the scythe as in Sonnet 100) which might have derived from Ovid's *tempus edax rerum* or Time the devourer of things. The poet is fearful of the cruel Time, not the gracious Time, which is sure to destroy even the most beautiful thing in the world (which is the Friend himself). Almost all the marriage sonnets<sup>(17)</sup> are to do with his unbelief in futurity: as he can not imagine any blooming days in future, he is recommending his marriage to the Friend, by which he can get a son in order to perpetuate his own beauty:

When forty winters shall besiege thy brow,  
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field,  
Thy youth's proud livery so gazed on now,  
Will be a tattered weed of small worth held: (Sonnet 2)

Thy unused beauty must be tombed with thee,  
Which used lives th'executor to be. (Sonnet 4)

In those sonnets we may discern Time as the hero of a pseudo-morality play, on the scene of which we may see a tyrant enemy Time exercising an influential power over the frail and helpless man as in a war:

Those hours that with gentle work did frame  
The lovely gaze where every eye doth dwell  
Will play the tyrants to the very same,  
And that unfair which fairly doth excel:  
For never-resting time leads summer on  
To hideous winter and confounds him there,  
Sap checked with frost and lusty leaves quite gone,  
Beauty o'er-snowed and bareness every where. (Sonnet 5)

When the handsome boy was made by the hand of Nature, Time may be said to have been gentle and kind to him, but the progression of Time is nothing but the process of destruction and he is always being killed by the cruel Time. Then the poet's way of thinking is as follows:

She carved thee for her seal, and meant thereby,  
Thou shouldst print more, not let that copy die. (Sonnet 11)  
And nothing 'gainst Time's scythe can make defence  
Save breed to brave him, when he takes thee hence. (Sonnet 12)

There the poet advises his Friend to take a physical preventive against Time by which the latter himself can escape from the violent hand of Time. But he prepares another preventive which he can take on his part when he has perceived his Friend's unwillingness to marriage: this preventive is imaginative, and he will wield a war

against Time with his own power of imagination: here we should take note of his love explicitly ('And all in war with Time for love of you,/As he takes from you, I engraft you new'—Sonnet 15), while in Sonnet 10 he is slyly and implicitly expressing his love to him ('Make thee another self for love of me,/That beauty still may live in thine or thee'). Regarding the couplet of Sonnet 15 J. D. Wilson comments: 'This is the first time Shakespeare refers to his desire to immortalize W. H. in verse—and only timidly as it were, since verse is not mentioned.'<sup>(18)</sup> Not completely is he misleading us but Wilson's reading of 'his desire to immortalize W. H. in verse' might be said to be considerably far-fetched. For the poet here wishes that (1) he could describe the Friend as he is in his particular beauty (which he cannot, he might say) and (2) his double in future would testify to his own past existence (not the poet's skill of description). So in Sonnet 17 the poet's attitude of mind is in the position of advising the physical preventive against Time and no insolent wish 'to immortalize W. H. in verse' is explicitly expressed. Accordingly the marriage sonnets are mainly concerned with his apprehension about his Friend's future, and the result is the physical preventive being recommended to the latter with a tinge of love confession.

Here we should confirm that behind his sense of Time of this kind and his counter-measure of marriage are hidden his two observations as on the spot. The first is related to the present situation of his Friend's beauty: his present beauty is at the highest pitch and no ascent is expected of him hereafter: only decline will be its course of future as we see in Sonnet 17:

Who will believe my verse in time to come  
If it were filled with your most high deserts?  
Though yet heaven knows it is but as tomb  
Which hides your life, and shows not half your parts:  
If I could write the beauty of your eyes,  
And in fresh numbers number all your graces,  
The age to come would say this poet lies,  
Such heavenly touches ne'er touched earthly faces.  
So should my papers (yellowed with their age)  
Be scorned, like old men of less truth than tongue,  
And your true rights be termed a poet's rage,  
And stretched metre of an antique song.

But were some child of yours alive that time,  
You should live twice in it, and in my rhyme.

He is not sought after or worshipped by everybody but one's life (as well as one's beauty) is destined to have a prime time and a natural and necessary fall to one's end when one will not be adored any longer. He is on the borderline between ascent and descent: that is, he is on the top of beauty and he must prepare himself for the coming fall to find some countermeasure, if he hopes to be admired beyond his time-

limit. The poet's realization (and, furthermore, his love) of the present situation of his Friend has made him apprehend the Friend's future and persuaded him to his unwilling understanding of the influential Time. The other observation is on the world at large: he observes that everything in the world is always declining or being destroyed.

When I do count the clock that tells the time,  
 And see the brave day sunk in hideous night,  
 When I behold the violet past prime,  
 And sable curls all silvered o'er with white:  
 When lofty trees I see barren of leaves,  
 Which erst from heat did canopy the herd  
 And summer's green all girded up in sheaves  
 Borne on the bier with white and bristly beard: (Sonnet 12)

He may have understood the formula (Vegetable and Animal Kingdoms (and Mineral as well) =  $f(\text{Time})$ ) from his own experience and observation and because Time is the killer, all lives and things are always being killed, he may have thought. To sum up: his sense of Time and apprehension about his Friend's future are founded upon those two observations, one of which is about the general phenomena and the other about a particular intimate experience.

Lastly we may quote two characteristic sonnets in this vein in order to discover more important things about Shakespeare's imaginative attitude. The first observation, combined with his fear of the loss of his Friend, has produced the description of Time's destructive power in Sonnet 64 which might have been an Ovid's variation but for the last line of the last quatrain and the couplet:

When I have seen by Time's fell hand defaced  
 The rich-proud cost of outworn buried age,  
 When sometime lofty towers I see down-rased,  
 And brass eternal slave to mortal rage.  
 When I have seen the hungry ocean gain  
 Advantage on the kingdom of the shore,  
 And the firm soil win of the watery main,  
 Increasing store with loss, and loss with store.  
 When I have seen such interchange of state,  
 Or state it self confounded, to decay,  
 Ruin hath taught me thus to ruminat  
 That Time will come and take my love away.

This thought is as a death which cannot choose  
 But weep to have, that which it fears to lose.

This is young Shakespeare's *Ecclesiastes*: Vanity of vanities: all is vanity. The first quatrain presents us with the truth that all the greatest works by human beings

cannot be free from Time's destruction. The second and half of the third quatrain are about the changefulness of natural things or vicissitude in natural phenomena which is destined to be related to the uselessness of human works and helplessness of humanity. Then the hint of his love of his Friend makes us, all of a sudden, sympathize with his sadness. What is remarkably noteworthy about this sonnet is, however, the fact that no concrete image of the Friend or objective projection of him is revealed or, in other words, that he is not existent, as it were with body. This fact shows that the poet is seeking to wield an imaginative power so as to create his own image rather than the Friend's image and it might have been enough for him to confirm that he is just beautiful with no descriptive features. The absence of the hero of such a kind is plainly understood as a prerequisite for appreciating the *Sonnets*. In that sense, we might assume, it might have been more important and significant for the poet to create his own sonnets than to re-create his Friend's image in order to immortalize the latter.

As for the absence of the hero in the sonnets we may refer to Sonnet 103 which must have been written with some lapse of time between and in which the Friend in a different situation from that in Sonnet 64 is expected to be presented before us:

Alack what poverty my muse brings forth,  
That having such a scope to show her pride,  
The argument all bare is of more worth  
Than when it hath my added praise beside.  
O blame me not if I no more can write !  
Look in your glass and there appears a face,  
That over-goes my blunt invention quite,  
Dulling my lines, and doing me disgrace.  
Were it not sinful then striving to mend,  
To mar the subject that before was well ?  
For to no other pass my verses tend,  
Than of your graces and your gifts to tell.  
And more, much more than in my verse can sit,  
Your own glass shows you, when you look in it.

In this sonnet the poet is deploring of his inefficiency at poetic creation, though in appearance he is angry at Muse's silence. The poet's attitude of mind of this kind is similar to that in Sonnet 17 which has been examined above, though in sonnet 103 more experience on the part of the poet is accumulated and more poetic exercises have been done by him. While in Sonnet 17 the Friend is more beautifully re-produced by his own child than by his poem, in Sonnet 103 his reflection on the glass surpasses the poet's dull invention of him in the point of beauty. So here he feels as much sense of humility, struggling to write a good poem which would praise the Friend, as in Sonnet 17. But in this sonnet the poet's urgent eagerness makes us feel 'his (more

sincere and helpless) desire to immortalize W.H.', compared with his timid and unconfident suggestion of poetic work, and, confession of love. The most characteristic features of the *Sonnets* are not lacking in this sonnet, either and they are the absence of the hero and the most pronounced description of the poet's own suffering image. To conclude: referring to the Friend's future, Shakespeare is not introducing the formen's figure concretely and objectively, but rather, on the premise that his beauty is beyond question, he is trying to present his own suffering image and so we may say that the absence of the hero, as it were before the door, is one of the most significant characteristics regarding the sonnets concerned with futurity of beauty. We may go on further to add that Shakespeare cannot have individualized the Friend because of his own egocentric inclination on the spot of creation, though, viewed from the point of drama he might have characterized himself on the basis of the spectator's objective eye (or by the playwright's unconsciously calculating hand). Or we may assume he might have more easily grasped his own changing heart than his beloved as an object in itself and the latter's seemingly estranged response of feeling.

### (3) The Poet's Present Concern

Related to the apprehension about the future of the Friend's beauty is the present concern as to what he himself can do in his power to conquer the Time's cruel destruction; his beloved seems to him never to concern himself with his reproduction in future and never to assent to his proposal that he should marry some woman, so he cannot but seek after some victorious policy over Time: what he can manage to do in the capacity of a poet (or maker in its original sense) is to immortalize the Friend by the power of pen in the war against Time's sickle, to set his beloved's beauty unchangeable and to build a durable monument in the mind of the coming humanity: hence his determination to fight:

Devouring Time blunt thou the lion's paws,  
 And make the earth devour her own sweet brood,  
 Pluck the keen teeth from the fierce tiger's jaws,  
 And burn the long-lived phoenix in her blood,  
 Make glad and sorry seasons as thou fleet'st,  
 And do whate'er thou wilt swift-footed Time  
 To the wide world and all her fading sweets:  
 But I forbid thee one most heinous crime,  
 O carve not with thy hours my love's fair brow,  
 Nor draw no lines there with thine antique pen,  
 Him in thy course untainted do allow,  
 For beauty's pattern to succeeding men.

Yet do thy worst old Time: despite thy wrong,

My love shall in my verse ever live young. (Sonnet 19)

In this sonnet we might dare to say that the poet is dramatizing himself while seem-

ingly immortalizing his Friend, for in the present sonnet and time there appears no figure of the Friend, as we have seen in the last section: his determination is related to his dramatization of himself: the hero in this sonnet is the poet himself, saying, 'O Time, you may do anything cruel and fearful, but I never permit you to do one thing, because I am a literary Hercules. Even if you may be a greedy devourer, swift runner, wrinkle carver (i.e. sculptor), and antique drawer (i.e. painter), I forbid you do your work on my beloved. Though you may struggle to make him old, I challenge you to the competition for him. As you remain old, I dare to make him remain young.' Defying Time to do anything in his power, the poet comes to be unconscious of his self-dramatization, believing that his beauty must be protected from his cruel hand. The poet exists on the scene and the Friend disappears from before us. But we admit his present concern is genuine though the absence of the Friend on the stage is a necessary condition and both the premise that he is beautiful and the obsession that he ought to remain so should not be questioned. We find in this sonnet no explicit tenderness towards the Friend but rather egocentric determination on the part of the poet. (We might say this could be interpreted as the self-concentration on the creative course of making a drama.) What must be paid attention to is the poet's self-confident consciousness of his own powerful function as a warrior and maker, which may be interpreted to be either his urgent anxiousness to wield his pen at present or (rather feebly) his subconscious love to his beloved.

Then more explicitly and more determinedly the poet declares his power of writing in Sonnet 55:

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments  
Of princes shall outlive this powerful rhyme,  
But you shall shine more bright in these contents  
Than unswept stone, besmeared with sluttish time.  
When wasteful war shall statues overturn,  
And broils root out the work of masonry,  
Nor Mars his sword, nor war's quick fire shall burn:  
The living record of your memory.  
'Gainst death, and all-oblivious enmity  
Shall you pace forth, your praise shall still find room,  
Even in the eyes of all posterity  
That wear this world out to the ending doom.  
So till the judgment that your self arise,  
You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

Though the same theme is presented in this sonnet, we may discern the difference in tone from Sonnet 19. While in Sonnet 19 the poet protests against his so-called enemy, in Sonnet 55 he talks to his beloved, if not praisingly. So tenderness is expressed indisputably on the part of him and, his more self-confident determination and his

rather conscious tenderness mixed with each other in unison, this sonnet shows itself as 'one of the most splendid tributes offered to the Friend.'<sup>(19)</sup> His self-confidence and tenderness in this sonnet surpass, we may justly say, his urgentness and declaration of war in Sonnet 19. The wording in this sonnet shows his more conscious power of writing, as we may point out the words 'this powerful rhyme,' and 'The living record of your memory' and the sentences 'you shall shine ... in these contents' and 'You live in this.' Furthermore, presenting powerful and durable things before us, the poet dares to deny their powers, compared with his own power of writing in the octet. Even the most cruel instrument of Time (i.e. death) he defies in the third quatrain and lastly in the couplet he declares his victory over Time with a tinge of tenderness towards the one talked to. His will to protect tender beauty makes his own tender tone in the sonnet as a whole: the immortalization is nothing but the confession of love here; though the Friend never appears with his clothing of beauty, he is always present or omnipresent all this sonnet through. We may conclude this expression is the genuine concern on the part of the poet standing before the threshold of the dangerous future and determined, without hesitation or self-dramatization, to do his best in his proper and particular function: his consciousness of profession and his confession of love are closely tied to make a love's victory over the mutability of the world.

Lastly we may quote Sonnet 116, where the poet expresses his notion of love apart from the standing point of the Friend :

Let me not to the marriage of true minds  
Admit impediments, love is not love  
Which alters when it alteration finds,  
Or bends with the remover to remove.  
O no, it is an ever-fixed mark  
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;  
It is the star to every wand'ring bark,  
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.  
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks  
Within his bending sickle's compass come,  
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,  
But bears it out even to the edge of doom :  
If this be error and upon me proved,  
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

Willing to protect the beauty of his beloved, the poet may have discovered the logic of his sentiment : first he assumed that a beautiful thing must be perpetuated either by its own effort or others' will of protection; then, fearing Time's violence in future, he recommended marriage to reproduce him, to the beautiful one only to be refused ; then he determined to immortalize his beauty in order to defy Time's destruction, when, all of a sudden, he came to the question why he should perpetuate him and this

question is the key to the answer to itself; love towards his beloved is the original mainspring of his poetry; thus, starting from love of beauty, he comes now to the destination love in itself, without any concern of physical beauty, which must needs be destined to be destroyed at last: love is not to do with the changing beauty; it is the spiritual marriage, not the attachment to beauty, which should not be subject to change. When the poet say, 'It is the star to every wand'ring bark,' he is defining love as a precious unchangeable comfort and grace in this troublesome world. And his definition and proclamation of love is complete and final in the last quatrain, in which he explicitly and unhesitatingly declares without any regard to the fading beauty, 'Love's not Time's fool.' Beauty is not the question now (maybe ripeness in thought and experience is all) and his love will, he may be convinced, be immortalized instead of his loving beauty. His present concern about his beloved might have led, we conclude, to the discovery of love or the true meaning of life as well as beauty. When love comes to be the theme of the *Sonnets*, the natural beauty should have been conquered and abandoned. The poet might have been blind when he was concerned with his beauty and here and now his eye has opened for the first time and recognized what is important between his beloved and him.

#### Notes

- (13) *Op. cit.*, p. 165.
- (14) *Ibid.*, p. 148.
- (15) *Ibid.*, p. 153.
- (16) *The Elizabethan Love Sonnet*, Lever, J. W. (University Paperbacks), Methuen, London, 1966, p. 184.
- (17) *Op. cit.*, p. 89.
- (18) *Ibid.*, p. 112.
- (19) Kenneth Muir's estimation of the sonnet. *Ibid.*, p. 158.